CLAIMS

The invention claimed is:

1. An equipment housing, comprising:

a computing device located proximate said housing;

a user interface included in said computing device for use in sending information;

said information regarding the rack or equipment thereon.

2. The housing of claim 1 in which said computing device is secured to said housing.

3. The housing of claim 1, comprising:

an external system for receiving information through said user interface for the purpose of providing said information to a user.

4. The housing of claim 1, comprising:

a storage component in said computing device including at least some nonvolatile memory, said storage component used to store said information.

5. The housing of claim 1, comprising:

a processing component in said computing device for managing said information.

6. The housing of claim 1 in which said housing comprises a frame.

7. The housing of claim 6, in which said frame comprises:

a base member; and

first and second substantially parallel upright members, each having upper and lower ends.

8. The housing of claim 7, in which said frame further comprises:

a substantially horizontal cross-member for securing the upper end of said first upright member to the upper end of said second upright member.

9. The housing of claim 1, in which said housing comprises:

a base member;

said computing device being secured to said base member; said base member including a cover for protecting said computing device.

10. The housing of claim 1, in which said housing is a telecommunications rack.

11. The housing of claim 1, wherein said housing is a cabinet.

12. The housing of claim 1, in which said housing is adapted to receive a first piece of equipment.

13. The housing of claim 12 wherein said first piece of equipment is a server.

14. The housing of claim 1 wherein said information includes a location for said housing.

15. The housing of claim 14 wherein said location includes GPS coordinates.

16. The housing of claim 1, wherein said information is transmitted via a signal, said signal being transmittable between said at least one piece of equipment and said computing device through a first information channel.

17. The housing of claim 16, wherein said information channel comprises a bus.

18. The housing of claim 17, comprising:

a connector on said bus for receiving a reciprocating connector from said first piece of equipment.

19. The housing of claim 18, wherein:

said connector on said bus is a serial connector.

20. The housing of claim 18, wherein:

said connector on said bus is an Ethernet connector.

21. The housing of claim 18, wherein:

said connector on said bus is a fiber-optic connector.

22. The housing of claim 16, comprising:

an equipment interface in said computing device for receiving said information regarding said at least one piece of equipment through said first information channel.

23. The housing of claim 7, wherein said first information channel extends up a substantial length of said first upright member.

24. The housing of claim 23, wherein said first information channel comprises a first plurality of connectors for use in making equipment connections into said first information channel.

25. The housing of claim 23, comprising:

a second information channel which extends up a substantial length of said second upright member.

26. The housing of claim 25 wherein said second information channel comprises a second plurality of connectors for use in making equipment connections into said second information channel.

27. The housing of claim 26, wherein one of said connectors of said second plurality of connectors on said second information channel is adapted to receive a reciprocating equipment connector on a second piece of equipment.

28. A method of monitoring housing-mounted equipment, comprising the steps of:

providing an equipment housing;

associating a computing device with said housing;

interfacing said computing device with at least one piece of housing-mounted equipment so that information regarding said at least one piece of housing-mounted equipment may be used by said computing device.

29. The method of claim 28, comprising:

providing a memory component in said computing device; and

storing said information in said memory.

30. The method of claim 28, comprising:

providing an external interface;

sending said information to an external system via said external interface.

31. The method of claim 30, comprising:

providing an organization-operated-centralized-computing center to serve as said external system; and

using said center to monitor an organization's equipment.

32. The method of claim 28, wherein said housing comprises a frame, said frame having a base member and first and second substantially parallel upright members, said method further comprising the steps of:

extending a first information channel from said computing device;

securing said first information channel to said first upright member;

adapting said first information channel such that at least one piece of equipment may be connected into said first information channel so that said interfacing of said computing device with at least one piece of housing-mounted equipment occurs through said first information channel.

33. The method of claim 32, comprising the steps of:

extending a second information channel from said computing device;

securing said second information channel to said second upright member;

adapting said second information channel such that at least one additional piece of equipment may be connected into said second information channel so

that said interfacing of said computing device with at least one piece of housing-mounted equipment occurs through said second information channel.

34. The method of claim 28, comprising:

using said information received by said computing device for asset management purposes.

35. The method of claim 34, comprising:

using said information received by said computing device to inventory equipment.

36. The method of claim 28, comprising:

using said information received by said computing device for the purpose of detecting equipment malfunction.

37. The method of claim 28, comprising:

using said information received by said computing device for monitoring a location of said housing.

38. The method of claim 28, comprising:

using said information received by said computing device for identifying a particular location for a particular piece of equipment.

39. The method claim 28, comprising:

including with said information particular GPS coordinates associated with one of said housing and said at least one piece of equipment.

40. A method of monitoring computer equipment, comprising:

providing a computing device proximate a location at which equipment is to be secured;

enabling interfacing between equipment that is to be secured, and said computing device;

monitoring said equipment using said computing device.

41. The method of claim 40, comprising:

receiving in said computing device information from said equipment; and

using said information for asset management purposes.

42. The method of claim 41, comprising:

using said information received by said computing device to inventory equipment.

43. The method of claim 40, comprising:

receiving in said computing device information from said equipment; and

using said information for asset management purposes.

detecting equipment malfunction.

44. The method of claim 40, comprising:

receiving in said computing device information from said equipment; and

using said information for monitoring a location of said housing.

45. The method of claim 40, comprising:

receiving in said computing device information from said equipment; and

using said information for identifying a particular location for a particular piece of equipment.

46. The method claim 45, comprising:

including with said information particular GPS coordinates associated with one of said housing and said at least one piece of equipment.